Agriculture extension services

5404. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what steps are envisaged to revitalize the extension services in States;

(b) whether Government would consider supporting the setting up of regional/district agriculture training centres for farmers and extension works by funding through a special programme for the purpose;

(c) whether the States spend a large amount on salaries of extension personnel, but they lack infrastructure, and lack of funds has reduced the effectiveness of the extension services;

(d) if so, what steps Government envisage to support States; and

(e) whether a special Central scheme is being considered in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Though Agricultural extension is a State subject, the Ministry of Agriculture has taken a number of steps, the details are annexed.

(b) State Agricultural Management and Extension Training Institute (SAMETI) is established in each of the 7 States under Innovations in Technology Dissemination (ITD) component of World Bank aided National Agricultural Technology Project for improving technical and management competency of senior/middle level functionaries. Farmers Information and Advisory Centres (FIACs) at the Block Level for augmenting training and information support to the farmers are also being established. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has established 276 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) at district level and is re-mandating 53 Zonal Research Stations (ZRSs) to take up functions of KVKs. The activities of KVKs include technology validation/refinement, front line demonstrations and training of farmers and extension functionaries.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As indicated in the Statement. (*see* below)

(e) Yes, Sir. A Restructured Centrally Sponsored Scheme—Support to the State Extension programmes for extension reforms—is proposed to be operationalised during Xth Plan (2002—2007).

Statement

Details of steps taken with a view of revitalize agricultural extension services

— A Policy Framework for Agricultural Extension has been formulated. It envisages revamping extension service, to make it pluralistic, multi agency system harnessing the strengths of public sector, private sector, media and information technology. Further it proposes innovative and decentralised institutional arrangements with greater emphasis on group approach, farmer participatory methodologies, bottom-up stragetic planning procedures making the system demand driven and farmer accountable. The reforms in agricultural extension are proposed to be operationalized during Xth Plan through State Extension Work Plans.

— Innovations in Technology Dissemination (ITD) Component of the World Bank funded National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP) is being pilot tested in 7 States *viz.* Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Orissa and Punjab wherein new institutional arrangements and innovative approaches are being applied in technology dissemination process.

— A Central Sector Scheme on 'Human Resource Development in Horticulture' is in operation through State Departments of Horticulture/Agriculture and the selected State Agriculture Universities, Krishi Vigyan Kendras etc. for conducting training programmes for Departmental staff, Supervisors, Entrepreneurs and Gardeners.

— Animal Husbandry Extension Programme, a centrally sponsored scheme, is being implemented to cater to the needs of promoting Animal Husbandary activities in the States.

— Central Sector Scheme, Women in agriculture and Externally (Denmark, Dutch and UNDP) Aided Farm Women support programmes have been implemented with a view to improve extension services for farm women.

— Farm Information Communication efforts are being augmented by providing support to the States/State Agricultural Universities for promoting vernacular/electronic media, production of agricultural

films and organization of kisan melas/ exhibitions. Farmers exposure visits, interface with the scientists, NGOs and Farmers Organizations are also being supported.

— The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) concept is being promoted through 26 Central Integrated Pest Management Centres (CIPMCs) located in 22 States and 1 Union Territory for capacity building of extension functionaries and farmers.

Conversion of barren land into agricultural land

†5405. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of schemes under implementation, State-wise, to convert the barren land into agricultural land;

(b) whether it is also a fact that various schemes to convert the barren land into cultivation land are not being implemented fully through time-bound action plan;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor, State-wise; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to ensure time-bound implementation of those schemes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINITRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYANA YADAV): (a) to (d) Barren land includes exposed steep mountain slopes, snow-covered and such other areas etc., which cannot be brought under cultivation at an economic cost. There is no such specific programme being implemented by this Ministry for conversion of barren lands into agricultural lands. However, for the development of wastelands/degraded lands, following scheme are being implemented:

A. Ministry of Agriculture

(i) National Watershed Development Project in Rainfed Areas.

(ii) Centrally Sponsored Scheme for reclamation of Alkali Soils.

(iii) World Bank Assisted Uttar Pradesh Sodic Land Reclamation Project.

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.